GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:120
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2000
CORBETT PARK
MOHAMMED SHAHABUDDIN

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `Corbett park mein banghaon ki jagh gariyan daurane ke taiyari` appearing in the Jansatta dated May 22,2000;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken into confidence the members of the advisory committee attached to his ministry before releasing the prime forest land adjoining the Jim Corbett National Park; and

(c) if not, the concrete steps taken by the Government to ward off the adverse effect on wildlife and ecology of the above area as a result of the said move?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A proposal for diversion of 63.894 hectares of forest land for construction of road from Kotdwar to Ramnagar in district Pauri, Uttar Pradesh was received from the State Governmentunder section-2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 during 1996. In the proposal it was mentioned by the State Government that the road does not form part of any national park or sanctuary. During site inspection, Office of the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests, Lucknow expressedapprehensions that some portion of the road probably falls in the buffer zone of Sonanadi sanctuary. Accordingly, a clarification was sought from the State Government. The State Government reported that the road in question is located on the outer boundary of the Corbett Tiger Reserve and at present is being used for patrolling in protection of wildlife as fair weather road and its construction i.e making it to all weather road would help in better protection of wildlife in Corbett National Park . Similar report/recommendation was also given by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State Government.

The proposal was discussed in Forest Advisory Committee on 28th September, 1999 where it was recommended for approval in view of clear cut certificate from the Chief Wildlife Warden and the recommendation of State Government that the project would lead to better protection of wildlife in that area by all the members of the Committee present in the meeting. In view of recommendation of Forest Advisory Committee, the Central Government had approved the diversion proposal on 10th May,2000.

(c) While approving the diversion proposal, adequate mitigating measures have been prescribed like raising of compensatory afforestation on equivalent non-forest land at the cost of user agency , planting of native tree species on both sides of the road and non-use of explosive during construction of the road etc. The State Government has been also asked to ensure due safety of the wild animals of the park by way of prescribing a speed limit and construction of speed breakers after regular intervals. The State Government has been further asked to ensure compliance of Hon`ble Supreme Court order dated14th February,2000 where removal of any dead, diseased, dying or wind fallen trees, drift wood etc from any national park or sanctuary has been prohibited.